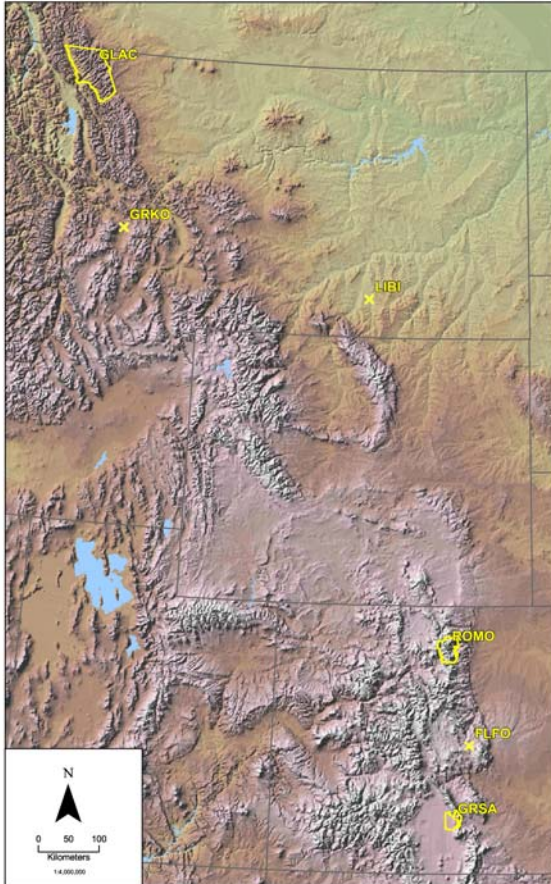


**Rocky Mountain Network  
FY 06 Briefing Statement/Summary  
November 28, 2005**

The Rocky Mountain Inventory and Monitoring Network (ROMN) is comprised of six diverse NPS units in Colorado and Montana. The staff is co-located with the NPS Natural Resource Program Center, 1201 Oak Ridge Drive, Suite 250, Fort Collins, CO.



**ROMN park units:**

- Glacier National Park
- Grant-Kohrs Ranch National Historic Site
- Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument
- Rocky Mountain National Park
- Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument
- Great Sand Dunes National Park and Preserve

**High priority ROMN Vital Signs**

- Landscape dynamics
- Weather and climate
- Wet and dry deposition
- Water chemistry
- Surface water dynamics
- Groundwater dynamics
- Freshwater communities
- Invasive/exotic aquatic biota
- Wetland communities
- Vegetation composition, structure and soil
- Focal species (elk, grizzly, beaver, Great Sand Dunes endemic insects)

**Funding**

Vital Signs Monitoring - \$633.5K (full permanent funding)

Water Quality Monitoring - \$61K (full permanent funding)

**VS Planning and timeline**

ROMN has selected its priority Vital Signs and completed its Phase II report (<http://www1.nrintra.nps.gov/im/units/romn/> (under the monitoring link)). This collaborative planning effort included more than 100 park staff, Intermountain Region and Washington Office staff and scientific/technical partners from other state and federal agencies and academic institutions. Recommendations for Vital Signs monitoring were developed in two Vital Signs Objectives workshops in 2005. The ROMN Technical Committee and Network Staff presented the recommendations to the Board of Directors and all park superintendents at a May 10-11, 2005 Vital Signs Selection meeting – the recommendations were adopted unanimously.

The phase III report/draft VS Monitoring plan is due Dec. 1, 2006. We will submit our final Monitoring Plan Oct. 1, 2007 and implement monitoring in 2008.

**Rocky Mountain Network contact information**

<http://www1.nature.nps.gov/im/units/romn/index.htm>

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**VS Protocol Development**

Over the next year, ROMN is developing monitoring protocols to include in the “phase III report” or the draft Vital Signs Monitoring Plan. “Protocol Development Summaries” (PDS) are posted on the ROMN Intranet (<http://www1.nrintra.nps.gov/im/units/romn/> under the “Monitoring” link). The PDSs are dynamic documents we are using to conceptualize and communicate our strategy for developing specific VS monitoring protocols among ROMN staff, Tech. Comm., Science Panel, and interested and potential collaborators in and out of NPS.

**ROMN protocols being developed for the phase III report and associated priority Vital Signs**

<b>Protocol*</b>	<b>Vital Signs</b>
Snow chemistry	Wet and dry deposition
Stream Ecological Integrity	Water chemistry Surface water dynamics Groundwater dynamics Freshwater communities Invasive/exotic aquatic biota Landscape dynamics (catchment composition; change detection)
Wetland Ecological Integrity	Wetland communities Groundwater dynamics Vegetation composition, structure and soil Focal species – beaver (effects on surface and groundwater dynamics, freshwater communities, etc.) Focal species – elk (impacts to wetlands) Landscape dynamics (large scale wetland spatial structure; change detection)
Alpine vegetation, composition, structure and soil	Vegetation composition, structure and soil Wet and dry deposition Weather and climate Landscape dynamics
Grassland/shrubland vegetation, composition, structure and soil	Vegetation composition, structure and soil Landscape dynamics Invasive/exotic plants

ROMN will delay development of other protocols. In some cases, others (e.g the Washington Office of Inventory and Monitoring or another network) are developing these protocols – ROMN will adopt or modify these as appropriate. In other cases, much research and development work must be done before ROMN can consider developing monitoring protocols – ROMN will work with the parks and others to accomplish this development work.

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**ROMN “placeholder protocols” – ROMN will adopt protocols being developed by other networks or the Washington Office of Inventory and Monitoring after Dec. 2006**

<b>Protocol*</b>	<b>Reason to delay</b>	<b>Vital Signs</b>
Landscape dynamics	WASO and other networks developing protocols ROMN may adopt	Landscape dynamics
High elevation weather and climate	WASO developing protocol	Weather and climate
Alpine lakes	Existing protocols may suffice. ROMN will take advantage of other networks protocol development work (e.g. NCCN) with appropriate modifications to sample designs	Water chemistry Surface water dynamics Groundwater dynamics Freshwater communities Invasive aquatic biota Landscape dynamics (catchment composition; change detection)
Invasive/exotic plants – early detection	WASO and other networks developing protocols ROMN may adopt	Invasive/exotic plants
Focal species – elk	Other ROMN protocols (e.g., Wetland ecological integrity, Alpine vegetation composition, structure, and soil) will address some elk monitoring information needs	Focal species – elk
Focal species – grizzly bear	Other ROMN protocols (e.g., Landscape dynamics) may address some grizzly bear monitoring information needs	Focal species – grizzly bear
Focal species – beaver	Other ROMN protocols (e.g., Stream and Wetland ecological integrity, Landscape dynamics ) may address beaver monitoring information needs	Focal species – beaver
Focal species – GRSA endemic insects	Baseline life history and inventory information needed before protocols can be developed.	Focal species – GRSA endemic insects

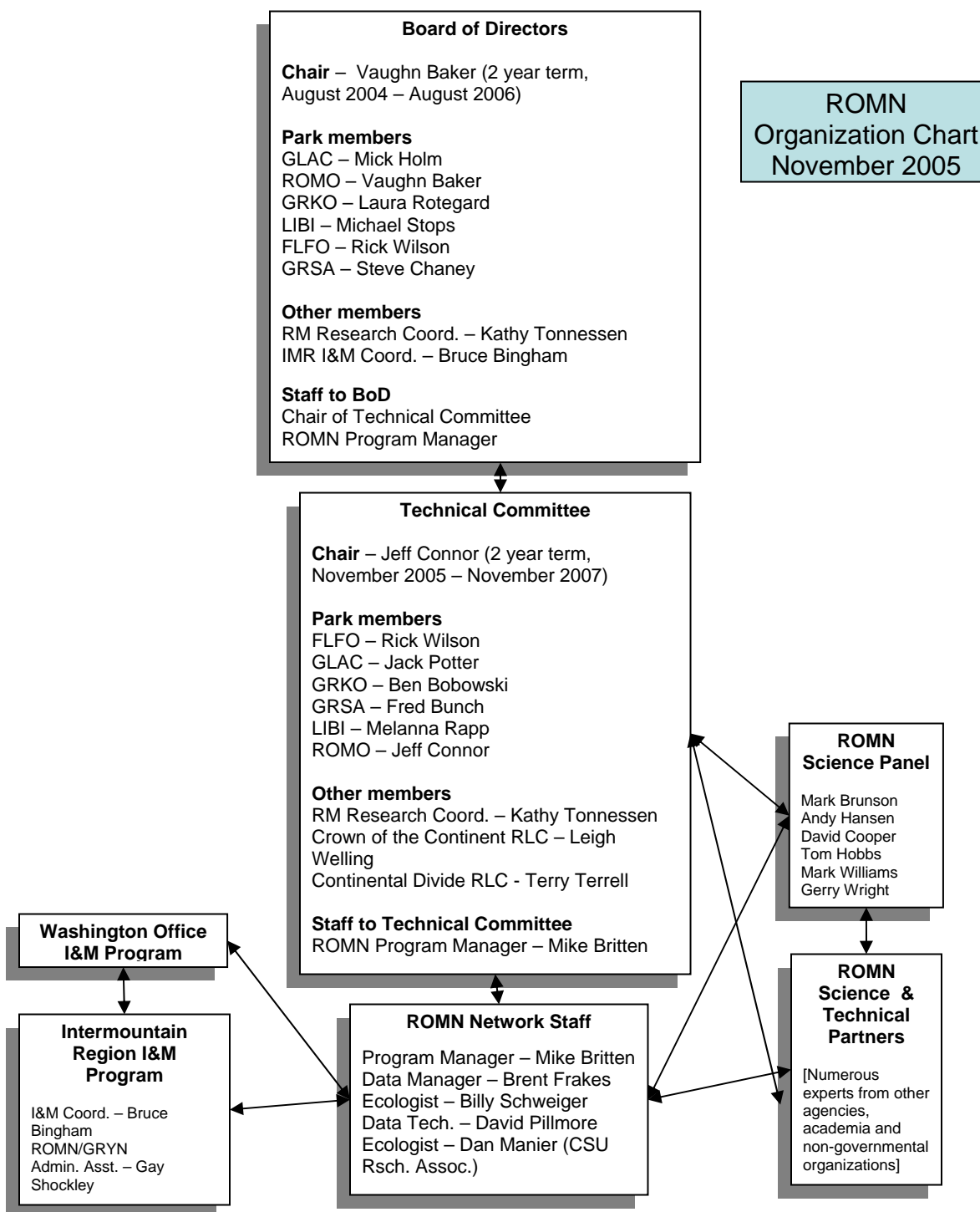
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